



LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR ABEL MALDONADO

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Contact: Erin Shaw
Erin.Shaw@ltg.ca.gov ; (916) 203-1278

California Lieutenant Governor Leads Official Delegation To Gulf Coast

Delegation Brings Environmental and Economic Recovery Resources

LOUISIANA –Today, California Lt. Governor Maldonado arrived in Louisiana with a delegation bringing California economic and environmental resources to Louisiana to assist in its recovery from the catastrophic Deepwater Horizon oil spill. In keeping with the Lt. Governor's efforts to strengthen California's oil spill prevention efforts as a member of the State Lands Commission, the Lt. Governor also met with Louisiana state officials from the Office of State Lands and their Natural Resources Department to discuss best practices and strategize on how to better protect their respective coastlines. Though California has recovered from on and offshore oil spills in the past, the Commission is currently reviewing its oil spill prevention protocols in light of the Gulf spill.

The Lt. Governor began his visit Wednesday morning with a briefing by the US Coast Guard at the Incident Command Post in Houma, LA, where he met with California state employees who are on rotational duty in the Gulf to assist with the government's strategic response to the spill.

"California is a state that is experienced in disaster recovery, where wildfires and earthquakes have taught us to reach out to our neighbors in times of need. I've seen firsthand the devastation a moderate oil spill can do to coastal lands, and the Gulf states deserve to have all hands on deck to respond to this crisis," said Lt. Governor Maldonado.

After surveying the coastal response efforts via a previously scheduled aerial tour, Lt. Governor Maldonado held a productive meeting in New Orleans with delegation member Karin Fish, COO of California's Travel and Tourism Commission, and Louisiana's Secretary for Tourism, Jim Hutchinson, where expertise was shared to help revitalize Louisiana's tourism industry.

"We all have a stake in the Gulf states' long term economic health, and like California, tourism is a major component to Louisiana's economy," said Ms. Fish. "California has survived many types of disasters before, and we're honored to offer our resources to help businesses get back on their feet and return tourists to the Gulf."

Also in New Orleans, Lt. Governor Maldonado and Lin McNamara, a California Conservation Corps' hazardous waste cleanup expert, led a training session for dozens of volunteers from Hands On New Orleans on proper volunteer cleanup protocol. By providing specialized training in hazardous waste cleanup, New Orleans volunteers will be prepared to augment the privately funded environmental efforts currently underway in the Gulf.

During the training, the Lt. Governor Maldonado stated that the interstate communication pathways are possibly not being utilized to their fullest capacity, and announced that California's Conservation Corps can offer hundreds of specially trained Corps members to assist in cleanup labor. Interstate requests must be executed from one state's government to another in order for resources to be delivered. The CCC has yet to receive a request for any resources from a Gulf state. Due to the critical economic and environmental circumstances facing the Gulf, the delegation made it clear that California stands ready to help expedite interstate requests that will potentially result in hundreds of trained Corps workers becoming available to help with the oil spill recovery.

"We're not here to criticize; we're only here to help," said Lt. Governor Maldonado. "California has a unique emergency response system and specially trained Corps members that could be valuable to Louisiana, and I encourage the Gulf states to utilize California's experience to rebuild. We stand ready and willing to provide whatever resources are needed to spur the Gulf's environmental recovery. Every state in this nation should be reaching out to help ensure the Gulf's success."

"Trained responders are going to be needed for the hard months ahead to work alongside and complement the private efforts to revitalize the Gulf's natural environment, and the California Conservation Corps can provide valuable training on wildlife and coastal recovery efforts, as well as help activate the Corps network in other states," said Lynn McNamara.

The California Conservation Corps is one of California's premier emergency response forces. Since its inception in 1976, the Corps has provided more than 9.3 million hours of emergency response on nearly every major natural disaster. Crews can be dispatched within hours anywhere in the state. In 2008, corpsmembers devoted more than a half-million hours to fire response, and also fought floods and pest infestations.

The California Travel & Tourism Commission (CTTC) is a non-profit organization with a mission to develop and maintain marketing programs - in partnership with the state's travel industry - that keep California top-of-mind as a premier travel destination. In 2008, travel and tourism expenditures total \$97.6 billion annually in California, support jobs for 924,000 Californians and generate \$5.8 billion in state and local tax revenues